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READ TELEGRAM CLASSIFIED

National Defense Problems VII--Lessons of the War--Explosives

By Frederic J. Haskin,

new types of guns, new methods of which is used for small arms and canfort construction and new machines non alike, is modified in action by the
for hurrying the death-dealing monsters from one place to another, it has
into cords—whence its name—of also provided a vast experimental smaller or larger size. The larger plain for the motive forces which lie the cord, the slower its combustion.

Uncle Sam himself maintains a num-ber of proving grounds for new kinds of powder where the efficiency of each new explosive designed by the gov-new explosive designed by the government chemfists is demonstrated, but since Angust 1 last he has been depending in large part upon the greatest "proving ground" ever provided, the battlefields of the European experimenting with the avention of war. Ever since the conflict comchemists well versed in the composiignorant of the latest words in gun-powder and its modern derivatives.

ted to the Chinese is a compound of omparatively recent invention, known the British military experts as "T. might possibly change the fate of nations."
T." and to the Germans as "Trotyl." tions. To chemists this substance masquerdes under the name of "Trinitroto- the European war to date is the nec uene," a title which is almost as essity of turning back the clock of leadly to the person who tries to pro-nounce it as would be a small quantity While the explosives which are being of the compound. The precise com-bination and method of preparation of chemical factories, their containers this explosive differ slightly in differ-ent countries, but the resultant sub-stance is practically the same. A con-siderable quantity of trotyl has already been manufactured in the Uni-were often as close as fifty or seventy-ed States and the war department is five yards and it was therefore pracexperimenting with it in an effort to tically impossible to devise any gun or discover whether it is sufficiently sucannon whic would fire the projectiles perior to the explosives formerly in at such an angle that they would drop varrant its adoption.

powerful than any other explosive be effective at shorter ranges. According the point of fact, there are substances known to the chemist that explode with greater violence than is manifested by any compound used in the construction of the point of the

nilitary explosives or propellants. upon its capacity to produce a large fuse is lighted and the bomb thrown volume of gas from a comparatively small amount of original solid matter. Judged by this standard, the most powerful explosive known is probably a sait of hylrazole acid, the qualities of the fuses, however, some appropriate the standard of the same appropriate the standard of the same appropriate the same approp of gases for one gram weight of sub-at the moment of firing. No other known substance gives a corresponding change of volor in place of dynamite.

Too Sensitive.

eme violence if heated to a temperature only slightly above the normal before bursting, thus creating consid-boiling point of water. They are therefore far too sensitive to be used for the practical purposes in which military explosives are put. Moreover, their extreme violence of atcion would side of the Atlantic. e, to some extent, a disadvantage. It structive effect than would be produced by an explosive that burst the shell into relatively large pieces and by relatively slow combustion, extend-dealing vapors for acres around. The d the area of its destructive in-

n general, it may be said that the practical explosives now used in war-fare are modified in such a way as to retard than to accelerate their rapidity action when detonated. For ex-



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behind the projectiles—the new ex-plosives. - Thus it may be adapted to the re-quirements of a relatively slow burn-

menced the United States government perts claim is destined to revolution-has been closely watching, through the warfare on the sea quite as much the medium of military experts and as has the submarine. This invention consists of a torpedo o fa novel size tion of detonants, the different kinds and shape capable of being guided or of explosives used abroad, with a directed by means of a wireless station view to adopting the best of them for several mies distant. The torpedo is use in this country. In the event of under the control of the marksman war, the United States will not be from the time it is launched and it gnorant of the latest words in gun-may be made to turn to the right or to the left or even dive at the will of th A Deadly Compound. wireless operator. The secret of the One of the most important of these process whereby the torpdo is guid-mprovements on the invention cred- d is being carefully guarded, for it is realized that if it proves itself, the possession of one such missile of death

One very striking lesson pointed by use on this side of the Atlantic to in the enemy's trenches such a short distance away. The Germans devised Because trotyl is the most efficient a gun, known to the allied troops as explosive yet designed for use in warfare, according to foreign experts, it must not be inferred that it is more yards away, but it was not found to

ound used in the construction of dilitary explosives or propellants.

The power of an explosive depends lar bomb, with a fuse attached. The ammonia compound of which pro-duces, according to the French chem-ist Berthelot, 1,148 cubic centimeters fects similar to the bursting of a gun

There is also a report of an American soldier of fortune, a former colime in passing from the solid to the legiste baseball star, who was serving caseous state, but there are chemical with the allies during the spring camreasons why it is unwise to try to use paign when the hand grenade warfare this substance in lieu of gun-powder was at its height. This young man's specialty was catching the grenades Too Sensitive.

In the first place, these compounds them back so quickly that they either hydrazoic acid explode with exempled in midair without damage or else reached their original destination

The tremendous advance in the would prevent their use as propellants, science of warfare and the great since they would burst the gun barrels and, if placed in torpedoes or manufacture of new explosives have mines, they would shatter their engiven rise to a number of highly immines, they would shatter their en-closing cases almost to the condition probably reports of epoch-making of powder on being discharged and on substitutes for gun-powder, such as he whole would thus have a less dethe French shell which was suposed to asphyxiate an entire company of

d the area of its destructive in-uence.
Such tendency to over-rapid explosion is a fault of picric acid and gases were introduced into the enemy's ts deritatives, lyddite and melinite. cover of darkness. This method was found to be particularly effective for paralyzing the enemy just before a charge was contemplated, but it can hardly be said to come under the head of explosives.

The Violet Ray.

The remains the Philosopher's Stone of warfare, the super-explosive for which inventors have sought during the last thirty years—the so-called "Violet ray" or "Infra-ray" or "Infra-ray" or "Fray" which will sound the knell of gun-powder and all kindred explosives as surely as they disposed of the armor of the Crusaders. This ray, trans-mitted through the ether like the wireless waves, will explode the ammunition or detonants of the enemy and destroy them with their own weapons. It will sink the greatest battleship by exploding the magazinos and will dispose of the submarine peril by exploding the torpedoes. It will be irresistible; it will be revolutionary.

But the violet ray exists only in the confidence of inventors who claim that it will be perfected within a short time. One thing, however, is certain the nation that controls the Ray will hold in its hand the destinies of the world. Until the discovery is made, the United States will continue to de-pend upon the modern explosives.

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